

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Status:	Statutory
Author:	Jill Parker and Sarah Thomson
Date issued:	March 2026
Review date:	March 2027
Approved by:	Governing Body
Approval date:	March 2027

In this policy, the term 'headteacher' means the Executive Headteacher of the Federation except where the Executive Headteacher or the Governing Body has delegated the responsibility to the relevant Head of School.

Flourishing in learning and love
"Do everything in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14)

1. Aims

This SEND policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND

1.1 Castle Federation vision and values

We believe that the child is at the centre of everything we do. Our federation and schools' vision of "Flourishing in learning and love" is fundamental to us. Our values embrace inclusion and our practice promotes it. We are schools in which the learning, achievements, attitudes and wellbeing of every young person matter.

1.2 Castle Federation aims

We aim to ensure that every child feels happy and safe, both at home and at school. We aim to provide every child with access to a broad and balanced education. This includes the National Curriculum in line with the Code.

We hold high aspirations and expectations for all pupils with SEND. We focus on meeting the needs and maximising the potential of all children and not just the naming of learning differences or medical conditions.

We aim to develop lifelong independent learners who are proud of their achievements.

We will achieve our aims by:

- Identifying the needs of pupils with SEND as early as possible. This is most effectively done by gathering information from parents/carers, education, health and care services and early years settings prior to the child's entry into the school.
- Carefully monitoring the progress of all pupils in order to identify possible SEN, intervening when progress is less than expected. This will ensure that all children are supported to reach their full potential.
- Providing a qualified SENCo who will work within the guidance provided in the Code (see below).
- Working with and maintaining relationships with external agencies when a pupil's needs cannot be met by school alone.
- Communicating and working in partnership with parents to gain a better understanding of their child and involving them in all stages of their child's education.
- Making appropriate provision to overcome barriers to learning and ensure pupils with SEND have full access to the National Curriculum.
- Operating a "whole pupil, whole school" approach to the management and provision of support for special education needs.
- Providing relevant training for all staff through INSET, and external courses relevant to the needs of the children that they work with.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy complies with statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) ('the Code') and has been written with reference to the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. More information about the reforms and the Code can be found on the Department for Education website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

This policy has been written by Castle Federation's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo), Castle Federation's Executive Headteacher, the Heads of The Thomas Coram CE School and Victoria Infant and Nursery School, and the Castle Federation Governor linked to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), in consultation with teaching staff, governors and parents/carers.

3. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 SENCo

The SENCo at Thomas Coram School, is Mrs Sarah Thomson (senco@thomascoram.herts.sch.uk/telephone via the school office 01442 866757), The SENCo at Victoria School, is Mrs Jill Parker (senco@victoria.herts.sch.uk/telephone via the school office 01442 865781), they will:

- Work with the Executive Headteacher, Heads of Schools and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the schools
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work in partnership with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the schools meet their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the schools keep the records of all pupils with SEND up to date

4.2 SEND governor

The SEND governor is Nicola Boddam-Whetham, who will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the schools and update the governing board on this
- Work with the Executive Headteacher, Heads of Schools and SENCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the schools

4.3 Executive Headteacher and Heads of Schools will:

- Work with the SENCo and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND

4.4 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCo to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy

5. Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social, emotional or behavioural needs. Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND. When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed including referral to specialist external agencies as appropriate.

5.1 Engaging with pupils and parent / carers

We will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account the parents' concerns
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEN support. Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and shared with parents. All parents/carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their child's education. In the event of any disagreement between parents/carers and the school, the Federation's published complaints procedure should be followed.

Parents/carers can view the Castle Federation's SEND Information Report on our websites. The local authority Hertfordshire Local Offer can be found on <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/the-hertfordshire-local-offer.aspx>

5.2 Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review.

The class or subject teacher will work with the SENCo to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs.

This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
- Their previous progress and attainment or behaviour
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data
- The views and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external specialist support agencies, if relevant

These assessments will be reviewed regularly. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

6. Links with other policies and documents

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with our SEND Information Report, available on the Castle Federation or individual school websites, and the policies detailed below:

- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Scheme
- Complaints Procedure
- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Positive Relationships Policy (including procedures for Anti-bullying)